



Shaping World Peace and Sustainable Development through Interfaith Harmony G20 Interfaith Forum, 5th - 7th September 2023, Pune, India

Introduction

The world is grappling with deeply interconnected crises, including violent conflicts, widening inequality, the ongoing climate crisis, and diminishing trust in global and local public institutions. These challenges demand new leadership that embraces an ethical and pragmatic vision, informed by both global and local insights, to ensure comprehensive engagement across sectors. In response to these urgent needs, the G20 Interfaith Forum, in collaboration with MIT-World Peace University and the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities, is organizing a G20 Interfaith Summit.

These gatherings will identify the crucial issues for the 2023 agenda while reflecting on the G20 Interfaith Forum's journey since 2014 in engaging with global agendas through the G20 process. The summit will be held at the World Peace Dome in Pune, commencing with a reception on September 4th, followed by Forum sessions on September 5th and 6th.

At the core of the summit lies a dedicated focus on the urgent calls to action from the world's most vulnerable communities. Notably, the summit will address the challenges faced by children, who have endured losses and new obstacles due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, as well as those confronted by inequalities and disruptions linked to climate change. Underpinning the entire event is the primary theme of fostering hope for a better future.

The summit will bring together a distinguished group of leaders deeply engaged in the religious dimensions of global debates, ranging from socio-economic crises to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda. The forum will emphasize tangible action

steps that can be taken within the G20 process, highlighting the transformative power of interfaith collaboration.

By convening these visionary leaders, the G20 Interfaith Summit aims to generate innovative solutions, foster dialogue, and inspire meaningful change. Through a holistic approach that considers religious perspectives and ethical imperatives, this summit endeavors to shape a more inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable world for all.

Expected Outcomes. The Forum will offer a platform for faith leaders, representatives of faith-based organizations, government officials, international organizations and civil society, and academics with relevant expertise, to come together to share experiences and provide added emphasis to suggestions identified throughout the year in preparation for the G20 Summit that is being held in New Delhi shortly after the G20 Interfaith Forum concludes. As the culminating event following preliminary events organized throughout the year, the G20 Interfaith Forum will form the basis for global advocacy efforts supportive of G20 Summit outcomes and continuing into the coming years.

Topics. The Forum will focus on specific global topics, including:

- A child-centered vision for the 2020s
- Galvanizing action to mobilize resources for recovery and social protection
- Assets, risks, and ethics that the Artificial Intelligence revolution presents to communities
- Post-COVID action: pandemic preparedness and health system reform
- Food security
- Urgent humanitarian and peacebuilding action
- Protection of religious and cultural heritage
- Action on Climate Change
- Revamping education in a post-COVID-19 era
- Making sure that the most vulnerable are not left behind

Event Structure. Spread over two and one-half days, the event will consist of plenary sessions as well as thematic break-out sessions. The event will also be made available to a broader global audience.

Target Audience. The Forum will be attended by over 2000 participants, including more than 100 expert speakers and presenters, participants, from India and abroad, including representatives of government institutions, international organizations, civil society, academia, and faith communities. The event aims to attract a diverse and inclusive audience, representative insofar as possible of the global population. Based on prior experience, a larger audience is expected to follow the event online.

About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum was launched in 2014, under the auspices of Australia's Presidency of the G20. It has progressed from a largely academic gathering timed to coincide with the G20 Summit to a sustained alliance of diverse religious leaders, practitioners from humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development organizations, and scholars. The purpose is to contribute to and help to shape global agendas through practical and ethical experience and

wisdom of the world's diverse religious communities, which are often absent from global forums. The extensive contributions of the related "network of networks" as well as the prophetic voice and leadership of renowned religious leaders can enrich the G20 deliberations and contribute, alongside parallel and often interlinked constituencies (civil society, youth, business, etc.) to addressing the urgent problems facing the world and its leaders.

About World Peace Dome

The WORLD PEACE DOME is a remarkable monument dedicated to the Centre of Wisdom, Knowledge Dissemination, and Social Transformation. Its conception, design, planning, and creation were carried out under the guidance and supervision of Prof. Dr. Vishwanath Karad, Creator of World Peace Dome, an esteemed Educationist and torch bearer of World Peace. This visionary project embodies the profound ideals of peace and spirituality. Indian Philosopher Saint Shree Dnyaneshwara World Peace Dome stands as a testament to architectural splendor and holds immense significance in the realm of knowledge. Its purpose is to foster a holistic, peace-loving, and harmonious global society, conveying the message of peace and divinity.

As a sacred space for interreligious peace and dialogue, the World Peace Dome embodies the fusion of Eastern spiritual peace and Western scientific wisdom. It exemplifies the ethos of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' – the belief that "The World is One Family." With its magnificent structure boasting a diameter of 160 ft. and a height of 263 ft., it houses 54 larger-than-life-size bronze statues of illustrious Saints, Scientists, and Philosophers ranging from Saint Dnyaneshwar to Albert Einstein. This living heritage serves as a testament to the pursuit of peace and sustainable development, values that lie at the core of UNESCO's mandate.

About the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities

The Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities was established to empower faith leaders to work for the safety and security of our communities, tackling issues such as child sexual abuse, extremism, radicalization, and human trafficking. The IAFSC aims to facilitate the building of bridges between key stakeholders including faith communities, NGOs, and experts in various domains. The IAFSC is conscious of the importance of empowering faith leaders, both at the institutional and grass-root levels, with knowledge, and to mobilize them to play a more active role in community safety.

CONCEPT NOTE

The G20 Interfaith Summit, organized in partnership with MIT-World Peace University and the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities, aims to foster global peace and holistic development. Recognizing the profound interconnectedness of pressing crises such as violent conflicts, inequality, the climate crisis, and the erosion of trust in public institutions, the summit highlights the need for new leadership that combines an ethical and pragmatic vision with nuanced global and local insights, ensuring comprehensive engagement.

The summit has the following objectives: to promote a culture of peace by engaging religious leaders and faith-based organizations in meaningful dialogue, emphasizing their contributions to conflict resolution and peacebuilding; to address interlinked crises by identifying innovative approaches that integrate multiple sectors and stakeholders for sustainable solutions; to empower vulnerable communities, particularly children affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and those facing climate change-related inequalities, by amplifying their voices and addressing their unique challenges; and to foster hope for a better future by showcasing practical initiatives, successful case studies, and visionary ideas that inspire optimism and belief in the transformative power of interfaith collaboration.

Key activities include high-level dialogues involving religious leaders focused on global debates, panel discussions and workshops on peacebuilding, holistic development, climate change, and social justice, showcasing best practices and initiatives implemented within communities, and facilitating networking and collaboration opportunities among participants to address identified challenges.

The G20 Interfaith Summit at the World Peace Dome in Pune, India, presents a significant opportunity to promote global peace and holistic development. By convening religious leaders, experts, and practitioners, the summit seeks to address interconnected crises and pave the way for a more equitable, sustainable, and peaceful future. Through a focus on vulnerable communities' urgent calls to action, the summit aims to empower those most affected by global challenges and inspire hope for a better tomorrow.

The G20 Interfaith Summit is a significant opportunity to promote the culture of peace and holistic development globally. By convening a diverse group of stakeholders and providing a platform for dialogue and collaboration, the summit can help to address the interconnected crises of our time and chart a path toward a more equitable, sustainable, and peaceful future.

Here are some specific objectives of the summit:

- To foster a culture of peace by engaging religious leaders and faith-based organizations in meaningful dialogue, highlighting their contributions to conflict resolution, social cohesion, and peacebuilding efforts.
- To address the interconnected crises of violent conflict, widening inequality, the climate crisis, and the erosion of trust in public institutions by identifying innovative approaches that integrate multiple sectors and stakeholders in finding sustainable solutions.

- To empower vulnerable communities, with a particular emphasis on children affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic and those confronted by inequalities and disruptions linked to climate change.
- To foster hope for a better future by showcasing practical initiatives, successful case studies, and visionary ideas.